

**Town of Leakesville Water Policy**

(A) The Town may, upon written request of a consumer supported by repair bills or other appropriate documentation, adjust such consumer's bill in the case of loss of water due to circumstances beyond the reasonable control of such consumer, such as a mechanical malfunction, blind leak, theft of water, vandalism, unexplained water loss or other unusual or emergency conditions. Adjustments shall not be made for faucet leaks.

(B) A determination of whether an adjustment is granted shall be made at the sole discretion of the Board of Aldermen or their designee and shall be final. In making the determination, the Town may take into account the cause of water loss, the consumer's opportunity, if any, to detect it, any negligence or fault of the consumer in connection therewith, and the promptness with which the water loss was discovered, stopped and repairs made.

(C) The adjusted consumer's bill shall be calculated as follows:

(1) The Town shall credit the customer's account by one-half of the quantity charge for the excess use subject to the following conditions:

a. The Town after investigation shall find all of the following:

(i) The meter was operating accurately;

(ii) There was no evidence that the excessive use was due to the intentional or negligent act of the customer;

(iii) After being notified by the Town via billing, letter, door hanger, or by any other means, the customer took prompt and reasonable action to ascertain the cause of the excessive use and to correct it;

(iv) The customer took corrective action within forty-eight hours of discovering or being notified of a leak and provides the Town with proof of repair within thirty days from the billing date for the period in which the water loss occurred.

b. The amount of water loss shall be determined by the Town. The average measured quantity delivered during the same billing period or periods in the preceding two years will be used when available and representative of the customer's normal use.

c. No adjustment shall be made for a charge or a surcharge which is not based on the quantity of water delivered.

d. Water loss adjustments will be limited to two billing periods and will also be limited to one adjustment every twelve months. The twelve month period begins the first month of the billing period following the last billing period for which the water loss adjustment was prepared. A second water loss by a particular customer would be eligible to substitute for the first adjustment, if the customer so requests during the twelve month period. If such an adjustment is requested

and it is determined to be eligible, the total adjustment will be equal to the larger of the two leak adjustments in the twelve month period after the first adjustment.

(2) The customer shall be responsible for payment of one-half of the calculated water loss at the appropriate rate. Water consumption not subject to the water loss calculation shall be billed at the appropriate rate.

A leak adjustment may be granted when ALL of the following conditions are present:

- Customer notifies the Town of an excessive utility bill that may be related to a leak
- Water consumption exceeds the customer's average monthly usage or twice the average monthly usage over the previous 12-month period (dependent upon the type of leak)
- Leak occurred on the customer's side of the meter
- Plumber's receipt or other proof confirms the leak was repaired

However, no adjustments will be granted where any of the following situations exist:

- Usage above the customer's average monthly consumption is due to seasonal usage such as watering of sod, gardening, filling swimming pools or whirlpools, washing vehicles, etc.
- Leak was caused by a third party from whom the customer is able to recover their costs. Examples include, but are not limited to, theft, vandalism, negligence and construction damage, unoccupied or vacant properties.
- When leak continues for three (3) or more months, there will be no adjustment for the third or subsequent months.
- The meter at said property has been accessed, tampered with, or turned on/off by anyone other than a Town employee and that action results in loss of water.
- A leak adjustment was issued within the past two (2) years for the same premise.

### **Late Charge and Disconnections**

Late charges are applied on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. If the 15<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend or a holiday, the late charges will be applied on the following business day after the US Mail (noon, 12pm). If your account has a balance of more than \$10.00D, your account will have a late charge assessed in the amount of \$10.00. Disconnects are on the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month. If your bill is in excess of \$40.00 you will be disconnected. All disconnects require a \$35 fee to be reconnected. If the 25<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend or a holiday, disconnects will be done the following day after the US Mail, (noon, 12pm). Any connection or reconnection requests made before or after business hours (8am-4:30pm), will require an after-hours fee of \$40, in addition to any connection or reconnection fees.

If your payment is not at the office by 4:30pm on the 15<sup>th</sup> your account will have late charges applied the following day. If your payment is not at the office by 4:30 on the 24<sup>th</sup>, your water service will be disconnected the following day. The Town of Leakesville cannot be held responsible for lost or slow mail. Payments are posted by receipt date, not the date written or printed on a check or money order.

### **Pool discounts**

The Town offers a discount for homeowners with pools. You are allowed an adjustment on the water used to fill and maintain a pool, twice a year. An employee of the Town must have access to the pool to determine the volume of the pool to verify the amount requested. The account holder must sign a waiver to allow a Town Employee to access the property and provide a time they are available to provide access.

### **Return Check Policy**

If a check or bank draft is returned to the Town, a return check fee of \$40.00 will be required. The original amount of the check and the return check fee must be paid within 48 hours, after you have been notified. The Town will not be held responsible if you cannot be contacted because of incorrect or missing information on your account. The customer is required to notify the Town if their mailing address or phone number changes. If your account balance exceeds \$40.00 after the return check has been added back to your account (after the 48 hour period), you will be disconnected. You will be required to pay the past due amount, check fee, and a reconnect fee.

### **Meter Accessibility**

The customer is responsible for making the Town's water meter accessible to the Town at all times. The meter box and surrounding area shall be free of excess foliage and/or debris. In circumstances where the water meter is not accessible to the Town, the Town will deliver a written notice to the customer requesting that access be made available within five (5) business days. The Customer is responsible for making the Town's water meter accessible to the Town within the time required by such notice. Failure to observe these time limits is considered fraudulent use of service, and will entitle the Town to relocate and/or discontinue water service. In circumstances where the meter box or surrounding area has excess foliage and/or debris, the Town will deliver a written notice to the customer requesting the meter box and surrounding area be free of excess foliage and/or debris within five (5) business days. The Customer is responsible for clearing the meter box and surrounding area from excess debris and foliage within the time required by such notice. Failure to observe these time limits will entitle the Town to clear the area around the meter box. The property owner will be charged the actual cost incurred by the Town to clear the area around the meter box. Water meter boxes are the property of the Town. Any damage to the water meter box must be repaired and is the responsibility of the account holder.

### **Re-Read and Meter Replacement Policy**

A water meter re-read is defined as any water meter reading that occurs outside of the routine water meter reading schedule (cycle) for that meter. The customer may make a written request for a meter to be re-

read for the purpose of verifying billing accuracy. The Town will re-read the meter within 48 business hours of receiving the request. If the reading on the bill is found to be in error, the Town will adjust the account to reflect the correct meter read information. If the reading on the bill is found to be accurate, the customer will be assessed a meter re-read fee of \$15.00. *Each customer account may receive one meter re-read per calendar year with no meter re-read fee assessed.*

### **Request for Meter Test**

The customer may make a written request for a meter to be tested for the purpose of verifying the meter register accuracy for measuring volume of water passing through the meter. The Town will test the accuracy of a meter within seven (7) business days of receiving the request. The meter will be tested in the condition as found prior to any alteration or adjustment. The Town will use current meter test procedures and standards for determining meter accuracy. The customer may witness the meter test when reasonable. If the meter test results reveal that the meter is registering more water than the actual quantities passing through the meter, and the amount exceeds the allowable standard of 101.5% accuracy, then the Town will credit the account in the amount overcharged up to but not exceeding one (1) year before the error was identified. If the meter test results reveal that the meter is not registering more water than the actual quantities passing through the meter, and does not exceed the allowable standard of 101.5% accuracy, the customer will be assessed a meter test fee of \$15.00. The meter test fee can only be waived one (1) time per calendar year. The Town will provide a report showing the results of the meter test to the customer within 15 days after the completion of the test.

### **Request for Meter Replacement.**

A customer may request a meter replacement if they are not satisfied with the reread or meter accuracy test. All meter replacement requests must be approved by the Board of Aldermen. Meters are only replaced after the monthly meter readings are completed. If a customer's usage continues to be out of the ordinary, they will be responsible for paying a meter replacement fee of \$35.00. If, however, a new meter corrects the issue, the Board can issue an adjustment.